



June 3, 2005

Dear Community Friends:

As we enter the summer season, we want to send you a reminder about personal safety and robbery prevention. Last summer, the South Precinct area experienced a series of strong-armed robberies where our elders were targeted. We want you all to be mindful that strong-arm robberies also happen to young people (males and females), in the daylight as well as the darkness, and in every neighborhood. While the thieves are usually young males, they can be older males, or female. While most want your possessions and to get away without confrontation, some are not afraid to confront and are willing to hurt someone to get what they want.

There are good strategies to reduce your risk of becoming a robbery victim. These are taken from the Crime Prevention section of the Seattle Police Department's website.

Spot and Avoid Potential Trouble

- Be aware of your surroundings and know who is nearby.
- Pay attention to the uncomfortable feelings that often warn us of potential danger.
- Don't be afraid to cross the street, return to a business, or ask for help based on a "funny feeling". You may be right!

Minimize the Opportunity for Loss

- Learn to carry only what is actually needed.
- Carry only small amounts of cash.
- Take only the credit cards you actually plan to use.
- Leave expensive jewelry at home.
- Don't carry anything that is irreplaceable unless you absolutely must, even if it has no cash value.

Minimize the Opportunity for Injury

- Your safety should be the number one priority.
- Make a plan for how you would respond if someone tried to steal your purse or wallet.
- Don't resist or try to fool the robber.
- "Instinctive" behaviors or responses can be overcome with practice and planning.

Carrying Valuables Safely

- Handbags should be closed, carried in front of the body with an arm held loosely across it. A bag dangling by your side is much easier for a thief to grab on the run.
- If wearing a handbag with a strap over the head, choose a thin strap, and wear it under your coat. This makes it harder for the robber to grab the strap. A hard yank on a strap may cause a fall and an injury.
- Many women find they don't need to carry a handbag all the time. Place essentials (keys, small amount of cash, I.D.) in a pocket.
- Avoid carrying house keys in your handbag. Instead, carry keys in a pocket. Chances are your address is on a document in the bag. If the thief has your keys and address he/she has easy entry to your home.
- Consider reducing the items of personal or sentimental value that you routinely carry. Losing family photos, address books, and important papers is usually more traumatic to victims than financial loss.
- If you must carry a large amount of cash or valuable items, do not carry them in your handbag or wallet. Carry valuables in an inside pocket.

Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon
South Precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator